

Reading Toolkit: Grade 5 Objective 2.A.6.e

Standard 2.0 Comprehension of Informational Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Informational Text

Indicator 6. Read critically to evaluate informational text

Objective e. Identify and explain information not included in the text

Assessment Limits:

Information that would enhance or clarify the reader's understanding of the main idea of the text or a portion of the text

Connections between the main idea and information not included in the text

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Lesson Seeds

Reading Grade 5 Objective 2.A.6.e

Activities

The teacher will provide students with an informational text. Both teacher and students will read the text, and the teacher will state the main idea of the text for students. Next, the teacher will indicate a portion of the text and offer students some choices of information that might help a reader better understand that portion of the text. The teacher and student will discuss the choices and decide upon the piece of information that would most help a reader and why that piece would be more helpful than the other choices. With repeated practices, students should ultimately be able to identify the main idea themselves and determine without a set of choices what information would clarify a student's understanding.

The teacher will provide students with an informational passage about a topic which while appropriate is not a familiar one. The teacher and students should read the passage together the first time, and the teacher should identify the main idea for the students. Next, students should reread the passage and use sticky notes to mark portions of the passage about which there is not full understanding. From a list of informational aids provided by the teacher, students must select one and explain how adding this aid to the text would help a reader's understanding. Ultimately, a student should be able to identify the main idea him/herself and determine without the use of a list the information most likely to help a reader understand the text.

The teacher will provide students an informational text from which all informational aids have been removed. Students will be directed to read the text and as they read record any questions they have about the content of the text. Next, the teacher should provide students with the original text, which contains the informational aids. Then students should read the original version to determine if the informational aids answered their questions. If their questions were answered, students should be able to discuss the importance of informational aids to their understanding of a text. If their questions were not answered, students should suggest additional aids that would enhance their understanding of the text.

After reading an informational selection, students will complete a chart like the one below.

Topic	Information Learned	Questions I Still Have

In small groups, students will discuss their chart and compile a chart of the information that would have been helpful in clarifying the text. Each of these charts should be displayed in the room, and students can take a "gallery walk" to read each group's suggestions and place a check mark beside those with which they agree. A final class discussion will consolidate those informational pieces that if added to the text would assist a reader's understanding.

Clarification

Reading Grade 5 Indicator 2.A.6

To show proficiency of **critical evaluation of informational text**, a reader must form a number of judgments about a text. To begin this process a reader must preview the text and its features and combine that information with prior knowledge to set a purpose for reading. During and after reading, the evaluation of informational text requires a reader to **determine the content of the text, the role of text features, text elements that make that text a reliable source, the author's opinion, argument, or position, the effectiveness and purpose of the author's word choice, and the effectiveness of the author's style**. A full evaluation of an informational text requires attention to each of these elements.

To begin a critical evaluation of informational text, a reader must use prior knowledge and preview the text to establish a purpose for reading. Once a purpose is established, that is followed by a close reading of the text. Next, a reader must judge how well the text provides information for the stated purpose for reading. Then a critical reader should be able to verbalize or scribe an explanation or analysis of the text by focusing on specific sections of that text and detailing how that **information meets or does not meet a stated purpose for reading**.

If that purpose is not met, a critical reader should be able to **identify those pieces of information that are needed to fully construct meaning**. Additional information may include more details within the text, more text features, or adjustments to the organizational pattern or existing text features. To determine what is required for meaning, a critical reader should closely read the existing text and then assess the degree to which the text meets a reader's purpose. A reader should note particularly the organizational pattern of the text and see how well that pattern helps a reader construct meanings from important ideas in the text. Those gaps in information that make it difficult for a reader to construct meaning signal the types of additional information that are needed.

The **analysis of informational text for reliability** is an important aspect in the text's critical evaluation. A reader must first discern how much of the text is factual. Once the factual information is isolated, judgments about its accuracy are necessary. A reader should access information about the author and his/her credentials as a means of assessing the passage's reliability. Depending upon the subject of the text and how current the information is also a reliability factor. When available, a reader can access other texts on the same subject to see if there is a consistency in the information. Finally after looking at multiple texts on the same subject, a reader can determine if the initial text contains the same information as the subsequent texts or if the initial text presents information not contained in the others. A discrepancy in information could point to an inaccuracy in a text or to a more current source of information.

Once reliability has been established, a reader should carefully note elements of text that address the **author's argument or produce clarity of the author's position on the topic**. Additionally, a reader should be attuned to **elements of bias** in the author's presentation of material. After reading is complete, a reader must implicitly understand the stated or implied main idea of the text. From that basis of understanding, a reader should look at the construction of the author's argument, noting any evidence of bias in the argument and looking for a fair treatment of opposing views on the topic. At that juncture a reader should be able to judge the impartiality of the material or the inclination of the author to present a single view of the topic. Based on that text evidence, a reader can make a critical decision about the text's fullness or limits of use to him/herself.

After a reader knows how useful a text might be, a determination can be made about what **additional information could help a reader construct meaning from the text**. Active reading skills will allow a reader to note a stated or implied main idea in the text. Then a reader can identify additional information that would add to, clarify, or strengthen their understanding of the text or the author's viewpoint. A reader's suggestions for additional information could include, but not be limited to

- Text features such as bulleted lists, captions, graphics, italicized or bold print etc.
- Information to address readers' questions that were not answered in the text
- Context clues, footnotes, or glossed words to help a reader understand unfamiliar words and phrases

A critical evaluation of a text also demands that a reader detect **words that authors use to affect a reader's feelings**. A critical reader can determine a reason for the author's word choice and the response the author wished to evoke. At the center of any persuasive text is a strong opinion, and authors use words to their advantage to create a strong emotional appeal to a reader. Repetition, rhetorical questions, hyperbole etc...all have the power to sway a reader's perceptions. A critical reader is aware of the power of words and examines this word choice to discern the author's tone. For example, a critical reader should be able to discern the difference in tone between "The hero was brave as he flew into the battle alone." from "The pilot was foolhardy flying into battle without cover." A critical reader must also note the portion of text where repetitions occur and determine why an author would wish to draw attention to that portion of text. Critical readers are aware of these elements and should be able to determine if they enhance an author's viewpoint. Finally critical readers should isolate elements that are used purely for emotional appeal and are not supported by fact.

Ultimately a critical reader should be able to **analyze an author's style** which is how an author uses language to relay ideas. An author's particular style has a direct effect upon the meaning of a text. For example, authors may use formal language to convey the seriousness of material or informal language to address the entertainment value of a topic. Or an author may use an informal style with a serious topic to evoke a particular response and cause a critical reader to consider why an author would not match style to topic. That disconnect between style and topic has a critical effect upon construction of meaning. A critical reader should also note how the author forms and uses sentences. The constant use of long, involved sentences or short, choppy sentences or a combination of both can alert a reader to a variety of emphases within a text. An author might use this stylistic formula to draw attention to a particular idea or to diminish the effect of an idea. Using sentence fragments is another way authors can achieve those same effects. Finally a critical reader should be aware that how the author uses language, makes choices about words, and constructs sentences that are planned so that a critical reader can develop insight into the author's intended meaning of a text.

Sample Item #1 Brief Constructed Response (BCR) Item with Annotated Student Responses

Question

Read these 'articles' about writing for yourself. Then answer the following.

After reading the passage from "Keeping a Journal," what question might a reader still have about journals? In your response, use information from the article that explains why a reader might still have that question.

Write your explanation on the lines in your Answer Book.

Annotated Student Responses

After reading a reader
might have the question
what is different about
a jornal and a diary. Because
the auther only wrote want
is the same.

Annotation: The student answers "...what is different about a jornal and a diary. Because the auther only wrote want is the same." The student answers the question and offers a minimal explanation in support. To improve this response, the student should reference the text giving information about the likenesses between a journal and a diary. Next, the student should explain how knowing the differences between a journal and a diary would be essential or interesting information to know.

A question a reader might still have would probably be "What do they mean when they said that each day, you place another small piece of yourself into it?" The reader might still have this question because the reader might not know that they mean that your putting a little bit of your thoughts in your journal. The reader might be confused if they see that statement has putting a little bit of you in the journal instead of your thoughts.

Annotation: The student answers "What do they mean when they said that each day, you place another small piece of yourself into it?" Then the reader answers the question "they mean that your putting a little bit of your thoughts in your journal" but explains that not all readers may understand that and may interpret the statement literally. The student answers the question and offers an explanation for asking the question. To improve this response, the student should use text support including information about the variety of thoughts that go into a journal or the comparison of the journal to a mosaic. Then the student should explain how that portion of the text might prove confusing to readers.

I don't think the reader will have any
 questions on a journal because
keeping a journal talks about
 what you should write about.
 Such as drawings, pictures, and
 a personal section of your life. What-
 ever you write is up to you. Also,
 because it talks about the back-
 ground of a journal like the word
 journal comes from the French word
 jour meaning "the day." Last it talks about
 what a journal is like a journal is a record
 of feelings, thoughts and challenges. Each is a
 true expression of the heart.

Annotation: The student responds that "the reader will (not) have any questions on a journal because"...the article "talks about what you should write about." Next the student uses text support listing items that could fit into a journal "...Whatever you write is up to you." ...and records the meaning of journal (le journal) from the French. The student concludes with "...a journal is a record of feelings, thoughts, and challenges and cites the text "Each is a true expression of the heart." The student answers the question and uses multiple examples of text to support the answer. To improve this response, the student should draw a conclusion about the stated text support showing that the article is comprehensive in its discussion of journals.

Handouts

from Keeping a Journal

By Trudi Strain Trueit

A journal is a record of feelings, thoughts, experiences, challenges, and goals from your personal point of view. It is your likes and dislikes, successes and struggles, values and viewpoints. It is what you think about, go through, cope with, and long for on your travels. Your journal is a mosaic of everything and anything that is important to you. Just like a real mosaic, where you cannot usually see the design in the artwork until you step away from the tiny bits of embedded glass, stone, and tile, so it is with a journal. Each day, you place another small piece of yourself into it. When you move back, you are able to view the full picture of your life's journey.

The word journal comes from the French word *jour*, meaning "the day." Similarly, the English term *diary* is taken from the Latin word for "daily": *diurnal*. Originally, a *journey* referred to how far a person could travel in a single day. Therefore, a journal reflected someone's written account of his or her day. A journal and a diary are the same thing, though "journal" is currently the more popular term.

Today, a journal is no longer a list of someone's daily activities. Modern journals are limited only by the imagination of their authors. The type of journal you choose, its design, and its content are all up to you. Your journal may be a spiral notebook filled with original poetry and stories, a leather-bound sketchbook or artwork, photographs tucked into a scrapbook, or an on-line journal. You may use words, drawings, photos, mementos, video, or audio to record your journey. While every journal is an unique as its owner, they all have one thing in common: Each is a true expression of the heart.

A Questioning Spirit

At age eight, a boy named Elwyn Brooks began keeping a journal. For the next twenty years, he would detail his thoughts, feelings, and struggles to overcome shyness. Elwyn Brooks grew up to be E.B. White, author of *Stuart Little* and *Charlotte's Web*. In 1970, White wrote a book called *The Trumpet of the Swan*. In it, the main character, Sam Beaver, writes in his journal every night before bedtime, always ending each entry with a question so he'll have something to think about as he's drifting off to sleep. Did writer E.B. White end his own journal entries the same way? Perhaps, but we'll never know for sure. Upon his request, White's personal journals were destroyed after his death in 1985.

from How to Write Poetry

By by Paul. B. Janeczko

What is a journal? Good question. Some people think it's a book in which you write things that happened to you each day. But if that's a journal, what's a diary? Another good question. So maybe before you can decide if you want to keep a journal, you need to know the difference between a diary and a journal.

For starters, both are, of course, books that you write in. But since a diary usually has a space for each day of the year, it comes with the expectation that you will write something each day and that your writing will be limited to the space provided for that day.

A journal is different. With a journal there are no expectations to write something every day. Nor is there any space limitation. You can write as often as you like in a journal. You can write a few sentences or many pages. And a journal can hold more than just writing. You might think of it as a gigantic shoe box that can hold all sorts of treasures and memories. It can be a mailbox, where you store letters. It can be a sketchbook and a photo album. A journal can be a combination of all these things.

Rubric - Brief Constructed Response (BCR)

Score 3

The response demonstrates an understanding of the complexities of the text.

- Addresses the demands of the question
- Effectively uses text-relevant¹ information to clarify or extend understanding

Score 2

The response demonstrates a general understanding of the text.

- Partially addresses the demands of the question
- Uses text-relevant¹ information to show understanding

Score 1

The response demonstrates a minimal understanding of the text.

- Minimally addresses the demands of the question
- Uses minimal information to show some understanding of the text in relation to the question

Score 0

The response is completely incorrect, irrelevant to the question, or missing.²

Notes:

¹ Text-relevant: This information may or may not be an exact copy (quote) of the text but is clearly related to the text and often shows an analysis and/or interpretation of important ideas. Students may incorporate information to show connections to relevant prior experience as appropriate.

² An exact copy (quote) or paraphrase of the question that provides no new relevant information will receive a score of "0".

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